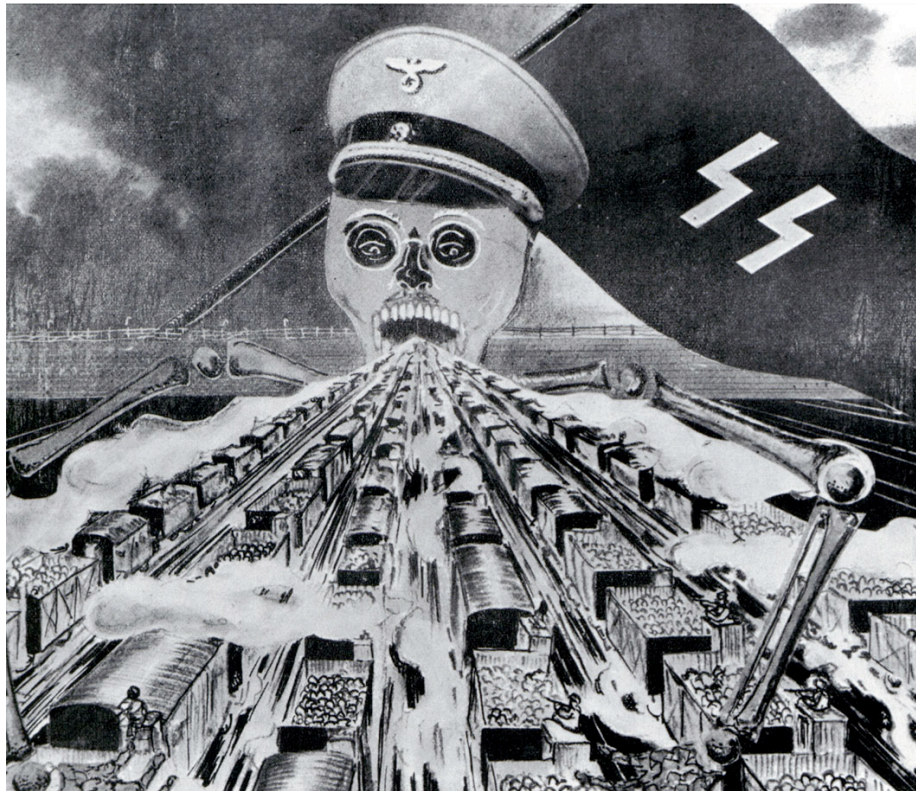


# As Seen Through These Eyes

## Study Guide



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*As Seen Through These Eyes*

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**National Standards for Learning covered in this study guide:**

### **NL-ENG.K-12.2 UNDERSTANDING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE**

- Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

## **NA-M.9-12.8 UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MUSIC, THE OTHER ARTS, AND DISCIPLINES OUTSIDE THE ARTS**

### **Achievement Standard, Proficient:**

- Students explain how elements, artistic processes (such as imagination or craftsmanship), and organizational principles (such as unity and variety or repetition and contrast) are used in similar and distinctive ways in the various arts and cite examples
- Students compare characteristics of two or more arts within a particular historical period or style and cite examples from various cultures
- Students explain ways in which the principles and subject matter of various disciplines outside the arts are interrelated with those of music (e.g., language arts: compare the ability of music and literature to convey images, feelings, and meanings; physics: describe the physical basis of tone production in string, wind, percussion, and electronic instruments and the human voice and of the transformation and perception of sound)

### **Achievement Standard, Advanced:**

- Students compare the uses of characteristic elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles among the arts in different historical periods and different cultures
- Students explain how the roles of creators, performers, and others involved in the production and presentation of the arts are similar to and different from one another in the various arts (e.g., creators: painters, composers, choreographers, playwrights; performers: instrumentalists, singers, dancers, actors; others: conductors, costumers, directors, lighting designers)

## **NA-M.9-12.9 UNDERSTANDING MUSIC IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURE**

### **Achievement Standard, Proficient:**

- Students classify by genre or style and by historical period or culture unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music and explain the reasoning behind their classifications
- Students identify sources of American music genres (e.g., swing, Broadway musical, blues) trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them
- Students identify various roles (e.g., entertainer, teacher, transmitter of cultural tradition) that musicians perform, cite representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and describe their activities and achievements

### **Achievement Standard, Advanced:**

- Students identify and explain the stylistic features of a given musical work that serve to define its aesthetic tradition and its historical or cultural context
- Students identify and describe music genres or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, identify the cultural source of each influence, and trace the historical conditions that produced the synthesis of influences

### **NA-VA.9-12.1 UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING MEDIA, TECHNIQUES, AND PROCESSES**

#### **Achievement Standard:**

- Students apply media, techniques, and processes with sufficient skill, confidence, and sensitivity that their intentions are carried out in their artworks
- Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques, and processes they use

#### **Achievement Standard, Advanced:**

- Students communicate ideas regularly at a high level of effectiveness in at least one visual arts medium
- Students initiate, define, and solve challenging visual arts problems independently using intellectual skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

### **NA-VA.9-12.2 USING KNOWLEDGE OF STRUCTURES AND FUNCTIONS**

#### **Achievement Standard:**

- Students demonstrate the ability to form and defend judgments about the characteristics and structures to accomplish commercial, personal, communal, or other purposes of art
- Students evaluate the effectiveness of artworks in terms of organizational structures and functions
- Students create artworks that use organizational principles and functions to solve specific visual arts problems

#### **Achievement Standard, Advanced:**

- Students demonstrate the ability to compare two or more perspectives about the use of organizational principles and functions in artwork and to defend personal evaluations of these perspectives
- Students create multiple solutions to specific visual arts problems that demonstrate competence in producing effective relationships between structural choices and artistic functions

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

### **NA-VA.9-12.3 CHOOSING AND EVALUATING A RANGE OF SUBJECT MATTER, SYMBOLS, AND IDEAS**

#### **Achievement Standard:**

- Students reflect on how artworks differ visually, spatially, temporally, and functionally, and describe how these are related to history and culture
- Students apply subjects, symbols, and ideas in their artworks and use the skills gained to solve problems in daily life

**Achievement Standard, Advanced:**

- Students describe the origins of specific images and ideas and explain why they are of value in their artwork and in the work of others
- Students evaluate and defend the validity of sources for content and the manner in which subject matter, symbols, and images are used in the students' works and in significant works by others

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

**NA-VA.9-12.4 UNDERSTANDING THE VISUAL ARTS IN  
RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURES**

**Achievement Standard:**

- Students differentiate among a variety of historical and cultural contexts in terms of characteristics and purposes of works of art
- Students describe the function and explore the meaning of specific art objects within varied cultures, times, and places
- Students analyze relationships of works of art to one another in terms of history, aesthetics, and culture, justifying conclusions made in the analysis and using such conclusions to inform their own art making

**Achievement Standard, Advanced:**

- Students analyze and interpret artworks for relationships among form, context, purposes, and critical models, showing understanding of the work of critics, historians, aestheticians, and artists
- Students analyze common characteristics of visual arts evident across time and among cultural/ethnic groups to formulate analyses, evaluations, and interpretations of meaning

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

**NA-VA.9-12.5 REFLECTING UPON AND ASSESSING THE  
CHARACTERISTICS AND MERITS OF THEIR WORK AND THE  
WORK OF OTHERS**

**Achievement Standard:**

- Students identify intentions of those creating artworks, explore the implications of various purposes, and justify their analyses of purposes in particular works
- Students describe meanings of artworks by analyzing how specific works are created and how they relate to historical and cultural contexts
- Students reflect analytically on various interpretations as a means for understanding and evaluating works of visual art

**Achievement Standard, Advanced:**

- Students correlate responses to works of visual art with various techniques for communicating meanings, ideas, attitudes, views, and intentions

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

**[NA-VA.9-12.6](#) MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN VISUAL ARTS AND OTHER DISCIPLINES****Achievement Standard:**

- Students compare the materials, technologies, media, and processes of the visual arts with those of other arts disciplines as they are used in creation and types of analysis
- Students compare characteristics of visual arts within a particular historical period or style with ideas, issues, or themes in the humanities or sciences

**Achievement Standard, Advanced:**

- Students synthesize the creative and analytical principles and techniques of the visual arts and selected other arts disciplines, the humanities, or the sciences

**[NSS-C.9-12.5](#) ROLES OF THE CITIZEN****What are the Roles of the Citizen in American Democracy?**

- What is citizenship?
- What are the rights of citizens?
- What are the responsibilities of citizens?
- What civic dispositions or traits of private and public character are important to the preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy?
- How can citizens take part in civic life?

**[NSS-WH.5-12.8](#) ERA 8: A HALF-CENTURY OF CRISIS AND ACHIEVEMENT, 1900-1945****The student in grades 5-12 should understand**

- reform, revolution, and social change in the world economy of the early century.
- the causes and global consequences of World War I.
- the search for peace and stability in the 1920s and 1930s.
- the causes and global consequences of World War II.
- major global trends from 1900 to the end of World War II.



## **Synopsis of the Film**

Picasso's words resonate, "I have always believed that artists should not remain indifferent to a conflict in which the highest values of humanity and civilization are at stake." The mission of *As Seen Through These Eyes* is to combat prejudice, intolerance and bigotry through a series of moving interviews with these survivor-artists. Each conversation brings with it the realization that every painting or sketch on a torn scrap of paper is its own Holocaust diary. Their words—and their images—are profoundly moving, communicating horror and hope artistically.

One only needs to absorb the evocative drawing of train tracks leading into the mouth of Death's head, its victims' plight compassionately captured by the artist, whose signature reads Simon Wiesenthal. His art, and that of all the other survivor-artists, are documents echoing the message "Never again!"

What is most heartrending is the art of the children; images from creators who were forced to become immediately what they would not have time to become naturally. Ela Weissberger, one of the few surviving child artists also performed in a rare camp opera. Having played the "Cat" in *Brundibar*, she is one of merely 100 child survivors among the 15,000 children who lived in the "model ghetto" Theresienstadt. In her interview, she speaks on behalf of the murdered children, "Please remember my friends. They cannot speak for themselves so I speak in their words." We see children's artwork and images of the ghetto and its random camp deportations, revealing what life was like for these innocent victims.

The film is partially scored with the melancholy harmonica music of Henry Rosmarin. Henry's harmonica was his very last possession, smuggled through three concentration camps, until it too was taken from him. A gaunt figure and a week away from the gas chamber, he was brought to face the camp commandant who was blowing into a harmonica but could not play. "Play me Schubert, you miserable dog!" barked the commandant. Upon finishing the song, Henry was given the job to play for the SS in their mess hall. This job continued through the end of the war. As he plays these solos through his tears, he tells us, "It may look like just an instrument, but to me it is a lifesaver."

Just as Rosmarin was spared, so were the lives of other artist-survivors. Dina Gottliebowa Babbitt was forced to paint Gypsy portraits by Dr. Mengele in the course of his monstrous experiments, and survived by doing so. Karl Stojka, a Gypsy child who was Mengele's errand boy, painted over 1,000 related canvases because he doesn't "want to forget anything. These images are burned into my mind." Samuel Bak's first exhibition at age nine in the Vilna Ghetto helped save his life as he earned recognition as a child prodigy. And Judith Goldstein made a promise to her father in the very same ghetto that, if she survived, she would "paint to tell the world what really happened."

These are the stories of people whose drive was to preserve their sense of self worth despite being stripped of all dignity. Their muses did not desert them during their struggle to survive, but empowered them to create in the face of death, leaving us with an undiluted record. As Simon Wiesenthal said, "I made it as a witness!"

There was one other, however, who did not communicate as an artist, although he tried. His realization that he would be unsuccessful as an artist fueled his desire to paint a larger picture of his twisted vision, and the signature on that canvas reads Adolf Hitler. *As Seen Through These Eyes* exposes the irony that its artists succeeded in the very arena in which their oppressor failed.

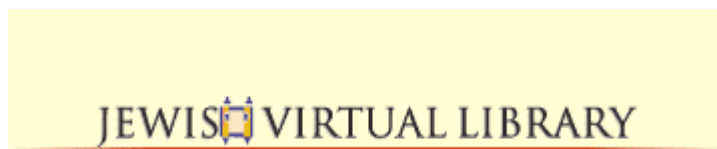
## **History of the Holocaust — An Introduction**

**Guidelines for Teaching about the Holocaust** – before beginning to teach any unit on the Holocaust, it is advised that the teacher consider the information and suggestions available from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum ([www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)).

[Why Teach about the Holocaust?](#)

[Methodological Considerations](#)

[Five Guidelines for Teaching about a Genocide](#)



The [Holocaust](#) (also called *Shoah* in Hebrew) refers to the period from January 30, [1933](#), when [Adolf Hitler](#) became chancellor of Germany, to May 8, [1945](#) (VE Day), when the war in Europe ended. During this time, [Jews](#) in Europe were subjected to progressively harsh persecution that ultimately led to the murder of 6,000,000 [Jews](#) (1.5 million of these being children) and the destruction of 5,000 Jewish communities. These deaths represented two-thirds of European Jewry and one-third of world Jewry. The [Jews](#) who died were not casualties of the fighting that ravaged Europe during [World War II](#). Rather, they were the victims of Germany's deliberate and systematic attempt to annihilate the entire Jewish population of Europe, a plan [Hitler](#) called the "[Final Solution](#)" (*Endlösung*).

After its defeat in World War I, Germany was humiliated by the Versailles Treaty, which reduced its prewar territory, drastically reduced its armed forces, demanded the recognition of its guilt for the war, and stipulated it pay reparations to the allied powers. The German Empire destroyed, a new parliamentary government called the Weimar Republic was formed. The republic suffered from economic instability, which grew worse during the worldwide depression after the New York stock market crash in 1929. Massive inflation followed by very high unemployment heightened existing class and political differences and began to undermine the government.

On January 30, [1933](#), [Adolf Hitler](#), leader of the [National Socialist German Workers \(Nazi\) Party](#), was named chancellor by president Paul von Hindenburg after the Nazi party won a significant percentage of the vote in the elections of 1932. The Nazi Party had taken advantage of the political unrest in Germany to gain an electoral foothold. The Nazis incited clashes with the communists, who many feared, disrupted the government with demonstrations, and conducted a vicious propaganda campaign against its political opponents-the weak Weimar government, and the [Jews](#), whom the Nazis blamed for Germany's ills.

### **Propaganda: "The [Jews](#) Are Our Misfortune"**

A major tool of the Nazis' propaganda assault was the weekly Nazi newspaper [Der Stürmer](#) (The Attacker). At the bottom of the front page of each issue, in bold letters, the paper proclaimed, "The [Jews](#) are our misfortune!" *Der Stürmer* also regularly featured cartoons of [Jews](#) in which



they were caricatured as hooked-nosed and apelike. The influence of the newspaper was far-reaching: by 1938 about a half million copies were distributed weekly.

Soon after he became chancellor, [Hitler](#) called for new elections in an effort to get full control of the Reichstag, the German parliament, for the Nazis. The Nazis used the government apparatus to terrorize the other parties. They arrested their leaders and banned their political meetings. Then, in the midst of the election campaign, on February 27, [1933](#), the Reichstag building burned. A Dutchman named Marinus van der Lubbe was arrested for the crime, and he swore he had acted alone. Although many suspected the Nazis were ultimately responsible for the act, the Nazis managed to blame the Communists, thus turning more votes their way.

The fire signaled the demise of German democracy. On the next day, the government, under the pretense of controlling the Communists, abolished individual rights and protections: freedom of the press, assembly, and expression were nullified, as well as the right to privacy. When the elections were held on March 5, the Nazis received nearly 44 percent of the vote, and with 8 percent offered by the Conservatives, won a majority in the government.

The Nazis moved swiftly to consolidate their power into a dictatorship. On March 23, the Enabling Act was passed. It sanctioned [Hitler's](#) dictatorial efforts and legally enabled him to pursue them further. The Nazis marshaled their formidable propaganda machine to silence their critics. They also developed a sophisticated police and military force.

The *Sturmabteilung* (S.A., Storm Troopers), a grassroots organization, helped [Hitler](#) undermine the German democracy. The [Gestapo](#) (*Geheime Staatspolizei*, Secret State Police), a force recruited from professional police officers, was given complete freedom to arrest anyone after February 28. The [Schutzstaffel](#) (SS, Protection Squad) served as [Hitler's](#) personal bodyguard and eventually controlled the [concentration camps](#) and the [Gestapo](#). The [Sicherheitsdienst des ReichsführersSS](#) (S.D., Security Service of the SS) functioned as the Nazis' intelligence service, uncovering enemies and keeping them under surveillance.

With this police infrastructure in place, opponents of the Nazis were terrorized, beaten, or sent to one of the [concentration camps](#) the Germans built to incarcerate them. [Dachau](#), just outside of Munich, was the first such camp built for political prisoners. Dachau's purpose changed over time and eventually became another brutal concentration camp for [Jews](#).

By the end of [1934](#) [Hitler](#) was in absolute control of Germany, and his campaign against the [Jews](#) in full swing. The Nazis claimed the [Jews](#) corrupted pure German culture with their "foreign" and "mongrel" influence. They portrayed the [Jews](#) as evil and cowardly, and Germans as hardworking, courageous, and honest. The [Jews](#), the Nazis claimed, who were heavily represented in finance, commerce, the press, literature, theater, and the arts, had weakened Germany's economy and culture. The massive government-supported propaganda machine created a racial [anti-Semitism](#), which was different from the longstanding anti-Semitic tradition of the Christian churches.

The superior race was the "Aryans," the Germans. The word Aryan, "derived from the study of linguistics, which started in the eighteenth century and at some point determined that the Indo-Germanic (also known as Aryan) languages were superior in their structures, variety, and vocabulary to the Semitic languages that had evolved in the Near East. This judgment led to a certain conjecture about the character of the peoples who spoke these languages; the conclusion was that the 'Aryan' peoples were likewise superior to the 'Semitic' ones" (Leni Yahil, *The Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 36).

## The Jews Are Isolated from Society

The Nazis then combined their racial theories with the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin to justify their treatment of the [Jews](#). The Germans, as the strongest and fittest, were destined to rule, while the weak and racially adulterated [Jews](#) were doomed to extinction. [Hitler](#) began to restrict the [Jews](#) with legislation and terror, which entailed burning books written by [Jews](#), removing [Jews](#) from their professions and public schools, confiscating their businesses and property and excluding them from public events. The most infamous of the anti-Jewish legislation were the [Nuremberg Laws](#), enacted on September 15, [1935](#). They formed the legal basis for the Jews' exclusion from German society and the progressively restrictive Jewish policies of the Germans.

Many [Jews](#) attempted to flee Germany, and thousands succeeded by immigrating to such countries as [Belgium](#), Czechoslovakia, [England](#), [France](#) and [Holland](#). It was much more difficult to get out of Europe. [Jews](#) encountered stiff immigration quotas in most of the world's countries. Even if they obtained the necessary documents, they often had to wait months or years before leaving. Many families out of desperation sent their children first.

In July [1938](#), representatives of 32 countries met in the French town of [Evian](#) to discuss the refugee and immigration problems created by the Nazis in Germany. Nothing substantial was done or decided at the Evian Conference, and it became apparent to [Hitler](#) that no one wanted the [Jews](#) and that he would not meet resistance in instituting his Jewish policies. By the autumn of 1941, Europe was in effect sealed to most legal emigration. The [Jews](#) were trapped.

On November 9-10, [1938](#), the attacks on the [Jews](#) became violent. Hershel Grynszpan, a 17-year-old Jewish boy distraught at the deportation of his family, shot Ernst vom Rath, the third secretary in the German Embassy in Paris, who died on November 9. Nazi hooligans used this assassination as the pretext for instigating a night of destruction that is now known as [Kristallnacht](#) (the night of broken glass). They looted and destroyed Jewish homes and businesses and burned synagogues. Many [Jews](#) were beaten and killed; 30,000 [Jews](#) were arrested and sent to concentration camps.

## The Jews Are Confined to Ghettos

Germany invaded [Poland](#) in September [1939](#), beginning [World War II](#). Soon after, in [1940](#), the Nazis began establishing [ghettos](#) for the [Jews of Poland](#). More than 10 percent of the Polish population was Jewish, numbering about three million. [Jews](#) were forcibly deported from their homes to live in crowded ghettos, isolated from the rest of society. This concentration of the Jewish population later aided the Nazis in their deportation of the [Jews](#) to the death camps. The ghettos lacked the necessary food, water, space, and sanitary facilities required by so many people living within their constricted boundaries. Many died of deprivation and starvation.

## The "Final Solution"

In June [1941](#) Germany attacked the Soviet Union and began the "[Final Solution](#)." Four mobile killing groups were formed called [Einsatzgruppen](#) A, B, C and D. Each group contained several commando units. The [Einsatzgruppen](#) gathered [Jews](#) town by town, marched them to huge pits dug earlier, stripped them, lined them up, and shot them with automatic weapons. The dead and dying would fall into the pits to be buried in mass graves. In the infamous [Babi Yar](#) massacre, near [Kiev](#), 30,000-35,000 [Jews](#) were killed in two days. In addition to their operations in the Soviet Union, the [Einsatzgruppen](#) conducted mass murder in eastern Poland, Estonia, Lithuania

and Latvia. It is estimated that by the end of [1942](#), the [Einsatzgruppen](#) had murdered more than 1.3 million [Jews](#).

On January 20, [1942](#), several top officials of the German government met to officially coordinate the military and civilian administrative branches of the Nazi system to organize a system of mass murder of the [Jews](#). This meeting, called the [Wannsee Conference](#), "marked the beginning of the full-scale, comprehensive extermination operation [of the [Jews](#)] and laid the foundations for its organization, which started immediately after the conference ended" (Yahil, *The Holocaust*, p. 318).

While the Nazis murdered other national and ethnic groups, such as a number of Soviet prisoners of war, Polish intellectuals, and gypsies, only the [Jews](#) were marked for systematic and total annihilation. [Jews](#) were singled out for "Special Treatment" (*Sonderbehandlung*), which meant that Jewish men, women and children were to be methodically killed with poisonous gas. In the exacting records kept at the [Auschwitz](#) death camp, the cause of death of [Jews](#) who had been gassed was indicated by "SB," the first letters of the two words that form the German term for "Special Treatment."

By the spring of 1942, the Nazis had established six [killing centers](#) (death camps) in Poland: [Chelmno \(Kulmhof\)](#), [Belzec](#), [Sobibor](#), Treblinka, [Maidanek](#) and [Auschwitz](#). All were located near railway lines so that [Jews](#) could be easily transported daily. A vast system of camps (called *Lagersystem*) supported the death camps. The purpose of these camps varied: some were slave labor camps, some transit camps, others concentration camps and their subcamps, and still others the notorious death camps. Some camps combined all of these functions or a few of them. All the camps were intolerably brutal.

The major concentration camps were Ravensbruck, Neuengamme, Bergen-Belsen, [Sachsenhausen](#), Gross-Rosen, [Buchenwald](#), [Theresienstadt](#), Flossenburg, Natzweiler-Struthof, [Dachau](#), [Mauthausen](#), Stutthof, and [Dora/Nordhausen](#).

In nearly every country overrun by the Nazis, the [Jews](#) were forced to wear badges marking them as [Jews](#), they were rounded up into ghettos or concentration camps and then gradually transported to the killing centers. The death camps were essentially factories for murdering [Jews](#). The Germans shipped thousands of [Jews](#) to them each day. Within a few hours of their arrival, the [Jews](#) had been stripped of their possessions and valuables, gassed to death, and their bodies burned in specially designed crematoriums. Approximately 3.5 million [Jews](#) were murdered in these death camps.

Many healthy, young strong [Jews](#) were not killed immediately. The Germans' war effort and the "[Final Solution](#)" required a great deal of manpower, so the Germans reserved large pools of [Jews](#) for slave labor. These people, imprisoned in concentration and labor camps, were forced to work in German munitions and other factories, such as I.G. Farben and Krupps, and wherever the Nazis needed laborers. They were worked from dawn until dark without adequate food and shelter. Thousands perished, literally worked to death by the Germans and their collaborators.

In the last months of [Hitler's](#) Reich, as the German armies retreated, the Nazis began marching the prisoners still alive in the concentration camps to the territory they still controlled. The Germans forced the starving and sick [Jews](#) to walk hundreds of miles. Most died or were shot along the way. About a quarter of a million [Jews](#) died on the death marches.

## **Jewish Resistance**

The Germans' overwhelming repression and the presence of many collaborators in the various local populations severely limited the ability of the [Jews](#) to resist. Jewish [resistance](#) did occur, however, in several forms. Staying alive, clean, and observing Jewish religious traditions constituted resistance under the dehumanizing conditions imposed by the Nazis. Other forms of resistance involved escape attempts from the ghettos and camps. Many who succeeded in escaping the ghettos lived in the forests and mountains in family camps and in fighting partisan units. Once free, though, the [Jews](#) had to contend with local residents and partisan groups who were often openly hostile. [Jews](#) also staged armed revolts in the [ghettos](#) of Vilna, [Bialystok](#), Bedzin-Sosnowiec, Cracow, and [Warsaw](#).

The [Warsaw Ghetto Uprising](#) was the largest ghetto revolt. Massive deportations (or *Aktions*) had been held in the ghetto from July to September 1942, emptying the ghetto of the majority of [Jews](#) imprisoned there. When the Germans entered the ghetto again in January 1943 to remove several thousand more, small unorganized groups of [Jews](#) attacked them. After four days, the Germans withdrew from the ghetto, having deported far fewer people than they had intended. The Nazis reentered the ghetto on April 19, 1943, the eve of [Passover](#), to evacuate the remaining [Jews](#) and close the ghetto. The [Jews](#), using homemade bombs and stolen or bartered weapons, resisted and withstood the Germans for 27 days. They fought from bunkers and sewers and evaded capture until the Germans burned the ghetto building by building. By May 16 the ghetto was in ruins and the uprising crushed.

[Jews](#) also revolted in the death camps of [Sobibor](#), Treblinka and [Auschwitz](#). All of these acts of [resistance](#) were largely unsuccessful in the face of the superior German forces, but they were very important spiritually, giving the [Jews](#) hope that one day the Nazis would be defeated.

## **Liberation and the End of War**

The camps were [liberated](#) gradually, as the Allies advanced on the German army. For example, [Maidanek](#) (near Lublin, Poland) was liberated by Soviet forces in July 1944, [Auschwitz](#) in January 1945 by the Soviets, [Bergen-Belsen](#) (near Hanover, Germany) by the British in April 1945, and [Dachau](#) by the Americans in April 1945.

At the end of the war, between 50,000 and 100,000 Jewish survivors were living in three zones of occupation: American, British and Soviet. Within a year, that figure grew to about 200,000. The American zone of occupation contained more than 90 percent of the Jewish [displaced persons \(DPs\)](#). The Jewish DPs would not and could not return to their homes, which brought back such horrible memories and still held the threat of danger from anti-Semitic neighbors. Thus, they languished in DP camps until emigration could be arranged to Palestine, and later Israel, the United States, South America and other countries. The last DP camp closed in 1957 (David S. Wyman, "The United States," in David S. Wyman, ed., *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, pp. 70710).

Below are figures for the number of [Jews](#) murdered in each country that came under German domination. They are estimates, as are all figures relating to [Holocaust](#) victims. The numbers given here for Czechoslovakia, [Hungary](#) and [Romania](#) are based on their territorial borders before the 1938 Munich agreement. The total number of six million [Jews](#) murdered during the [Holocaust](#), which emerged from the [Nuremberg trials](#), is also an estimate. Numbers have ranged between five and seven million killed.

Source: Holocaust Memorial Center (<http://www.holocaustcenter.org>) 6602 West Maple Road West Bloomfield, MI 48322

## **Terezin (Theresienstadt) Concentration Camp**

As [Hitler](#) transported tens of thousands of communal objects to [Prague](#), their owners were rounded up and shipped first to a city built northwest of Prague in 1780 by Joseph II. Ironically, this city served as a fortress to protect Prague from invaders to the north. Joseph II named this village after his mother, Maria Teresia, calling it [Terezin](#).

Hitler, the world was to be told, *had built a city for the Jews*, to protect them from the vagaries and stresses of the war. A film was made to show this mythic, idyllic city to which his henchmen were taking the Jews from the Czech Lands and eight other countries. Notable musicians, writers, artists, and leaders were sent there for “safer” keeping than was to be afforded elsewhere in Hitler’s quest to stave off any uprisings or objections around the so-called civilized world. This ruse worked for a very long time, to the great detriment of the nearly two hundred thousand men, women and children who passed through its gates as a way station to the east and probable death.

Of the vast majority of Czech Jews who were taken to Terezin (or Theresienstadt), 97,297 died among whom were 15,000 children. Only 132 of those children were known to have survived.

The Red Cross was allowed to visit Terezin once. The village of Terezin was spruced up for the occasion. Certain inmates were dressed up and told to stand at strategic places along the specially designated route through Terezin. Shop windows along that carefully guarded path were filled with goods for the day. One young mother remembers seeing the bakery window and shelves suddenly filled with baked goods the inmates had never seen during their time at Terezin. Even the candy shop window overflowed with bon bons creating a fantastic illusion she would never forget.

When the Red Cross representative appeared before this young mother, she remembers being asked how it was to live in Terezin during those days. Her reply implored the questioner to *look around. Be sure and look around*, as she herself rolled her own widely opened eyes around in an exaggerated manner. The Red Cross reported dryly that while war time conditions made all life difficult, life at Terezin was acceptable given all of the pressures. The Red Cross concluded that the Jews were being treated all right.

There were so many musicians in Terezin, there could have been two full symphony orchestras performing simultaneously daily. In addition, there were a number of chamber orchestras playing at various times. A number of distinguished composers created works at Terezin including *Brundibar* or the *Bumble Bee*, a children’s operetta and a number of chamber compositions which only now are being resurrected and played in Europe and the United States.

Terezin developed a deep feeling of family according to many of the survivors. As larger numbers of people were crammed into smaller spaces, a sense of community deepened. In the town of Terezin, the population had normally been around 5,000 people before the war. At the height of the war, the Ghetto/Concentration Camp Terezin held over 55,000 Jews. As a consequence, starvation and disease proved rampant. Thousands died of malnutrition and exposure. Their bodies were cremated at the small crematorium with its four gas ovens.

This was not a death camp, by the usual definition. There is no way to compare Terezin to [Auschwitz-Birkenau](#) or [Treblinka](#) or any of the other death camps where hundreds of thousands were gassed or murdered in other ways each year. Terezin, by comparison was a place to which people would apply so as to avoid a worse fate.

The elderly and families were brought in large numbers to Terezin. Then, in large groups, they were transported to the east, to Auschwitz-Birkenau, when it was fully operational in late 1942. There, the elderly were sent immediately to the [gas chambers](#) while the younger inmates who still could work, were temporarily spared. Terezin families were, in some instances, kept together at Birkenau, in family barracks, until their fate was met.

The Little Fortress at Terezin, a star-shaped thick-walled fortress, had long served as a prison. Few people were incarcerated here from the time it was opened in 1780 to Hitler, the one exception being the assassins of Archduke Ferdinand and his wife in 1914. The Nazis brought political prisoners and others to this hellish place never to emerge again. It was here that the Jewish artists were sent after having been caught stealing paper and other supplies with which they produced writings that recorded daily life in Terezin. It was their work which allowed the outside world to know dramatically about life in Terezin.

These artists also stole materials so the children could surreptitiously create their works of art. Six thousand drawings were hidden and later successfully retrieved to be displayed telling their poignant stories to thousands of viewers in Prague, Israel and at the [U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum](#) in Washington, D.C.

Source: Copyright © [Project Judaica Foundation](#).

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## **Roma – also known as Gypsies, Rom, Rroma, Romani, etc.**

### **History of the Roma**



The Roma people originally lived in northwest India in what is now southeastern Pakistan. They migrated to Persia between 224 and 642 CE. They lived under Arab rule in the Middle East from 642 to 900 CE, and eventually arrived in Constantinople. <sup>1</sup> Some authorities believe that there may have been additional migrations at a later date.

By the 14th and 15th centuries CE, some had drifted into western Europe where they call themselves Sinti (a.k.a. Zigeuner in Germany, Gypsies in the UK, and Zingari in Italy). <sup>2</sup> Some emigrated from Europe to the US and Canada in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Following World War II, and lately the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe, there has been an additional westward migration.

Most Roma settle down in a single location. Only about 5% of European Roma are believed to be nomads.

There are three language groups within the Roma:

- the **Domari** in the Middle East and Eastern Europe
- the **Lomarvren** in Central Europe
- the **Romani** of Western Europe

Within these groups, the Roma are organized into 4 main and about 10 smaller tribes or nations.

### **Names of the Romani people**

Many names have been used to refer to the Romani people, including: Cigano, Gypsies, Gipsies, Rom, Roma, Romani, Tsigani, Tzigane, Zigeuner, and others. Most Roma identify themselves either by their tribal name or by one of the names beginning with the prefix "Rom". Frequently, a prefix with a double "R" is used, as in "Rrom". *"...the Council of Europe has approved the use of "Rroma (Gypsies)" in its official documents (CLRAE Recommendation 11 - June 1995)"* <sup>3</sup>

Because of centuries of hatred, the name "Gypsy" has become a derogatory, pejorative and offensive name. The name was invented by Europeans, who incorrectly believed that the Roma originated in Egypt.

### **Persecution of the Roma in past centuries:**

They have suffered severe persecution throughout their history, particularly in Europe:

Rumors were spread in medieval times that the Roma were descended from a sexual encounter between a Roma woman and Satan.

Many Christians at the time believed that a conspiracy of blacksmiths, wizards and women had been organized to attack the Church. Since many Roma were blacksmiths, the conspiracy theory expanded to involve the Romani.

Another belief was that Roma forged the nails used in Christ's crucifixion. The Roma countered

with the rumor that a Roma attempted to steal the nails so that Christ could not be crucified, but was only able to grab one.

The Christian genocide against Witches during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance was also directed against the Roma. The courts seized and imprisoned them in Witches' prisons, often without even bothering to record their names.

The *Diet of Augsburg* ruled that Christians could legally kill Roma. Meanwhile, the courts were closed to Roma who were injured by Christians.

In 1721, Emperor Karl VI of what is now Germany ordered total genocide of the Roma. "Gypsy Hunts" were organized to track down and exterminate them.

Roma were rounded up and imprisoned in Spain during 1749. They were considered a danger to society. A pardon was granted in 1763, and the Roma were released in 1765.

In 1792, 45 Roma were tortured and executed for the murder of some Hungarians, who were in fact alive and who observed the executions.

It is believed that as much as half of the Roma in Europe were enslaved, from the 14th century until Romani slavery was abolished in the mid-19th century.

### **Persecution of the Roma in the 20th century:**

They have suffered severe persecution in ancient times, and this has continued to the present day:

During the 1920's, in the Weimar Republic in Germany, the Roma were seriously oppressed. They were forbidden to use parks or public baths. Roma were required to register with the police. Many were sent to work camps "*for reasons of public security.*"

When the Nazis took power in the early 1930s, the Roma were further persecuted under the "*Nuremberg Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor*" In 1937, Heinrich Himmler issued a decree "*The Struggle Against the Gypsy Plague,*" which increased police monitoring of the Roma.

During the Nazi Holocaust, they were declared to be "*subhuman*". In 1941-JUL, the Einsatzkommandos were instructed to "*kill all Jews, Gypsies and mental patients.*" A few months later, Himmler ordered that all Roma be deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau for extermination.

Sybil Milton, a former Senior Historian of the US *Holocaust Memorial Museum* estimates that 500,000 Roma and Sinti persons were executed during the Nazi Holocaust. This number is supported by the *Romas and Sinti Center* in Heidelberg. The Roma refer to this genocide as the "O Porrajamos" -- literally "*The Great Devouring.*"

There are about 5,000 Roma survivors of the Nazi concentration camps who are still living. Because of continuing discrimination, they did not share in any of the hundreds of millions of dollars given to other survivors of the Holocaust.

Above, copyright © 1998 to 2009 by Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance  
Originally written: 1998-JUL

## **Dr. Josef Mengele – the Angel of Death (1911-1979)**

Much debate is focused on Josef Mengele, the infamous doctor of Auschwitz, commonly referred to as the "Angel of Death". His most famous role was played out as the selector on the platform at Auschwitz whose whims sent one either to the gas chambers or to the camp.

Mengele was the second son of a well-to-do Bavarian industrialist. He is described by those who knew him in his youth as a serious student and a young person with obvious intelligence and ambition.

In 1931 at the age of 20 he joined the Stahlhelm (*Steel Helmet*); he joined the SA in 1923 and applied for party membership in 1937. Upon being accepted into the Nazi party, he applied for membership in the SS.

In his university studies, Mengele chose to concentrate on physical anthropology and genetics, eventually working under Otmar von Verschuer at the Frankfurt University Institute of Hereditary Biology and Racial Hygiene.

Prior to his arrival at Auschwitz, he had published three articles, one of which was his dissertation in the Anthropological Institute at the University of Munich and which was entitled "Racial-Morphological Examination of the Anterior Portion of the Lower Jaw in Four Racial Groups". His medical dissertation, published in 1938, was entitled "Genealogical Studies in the Cases of Cleft Lip-Jaw-Palate". This was a predecessor to his work on genetic abnormalities and indirectly on twins which was to take place at Auschwitz. The third article - entitled "Hereditary Transmission of Fistulae Auris" was published in conjunction with research done on the Lenz-Vershuer principle of "irregular, dominant hereditary process". It appeared in 1928 that Mengele was destined for the academia.

However, the route to a professorship was interrupted in 1938-1939 when he began his military experience by serving six months with a specially trained mountain light-infantry regiment. In 1940 he was placed in the reserve medical corps, following which he served three years with a Waffen SS unit. It was during this time period he was wounded and declared medically unfit for combat. Because he had acquitted himself brilliantly in the face of the enemy during the Eastern Campaign, he was promoted to the rank of captain.

According to Dr. Hans Münch, a colleague of Mengele's at Auschwitz, Mengele arrived at the camp in a somewhat privileged position - he had been wounded on the Eastern front and was the recipient of an array of medals, including the Iron Cross. It would also appear that Mengele selected Auschwitz because of the opportunities there to continue his research. According to one source (Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*) he did receive financial support for his work there. Support for continuing his professional career in genetics appears in another book, *And the Violins Stopped Playing* written by Alexander Ramati, where it is reported that a Professor Epstein told a comrade that "he (Mengele) has offered to prolong my life. Mind you, not to save it, just to prolong it, if I prepare a scientific paper on noma, which he would publish under his own name. It will keep him away from the front, he said, and justify his

presence here as a scientist."

No doubt exists that Mengele was a very active commandant of the Auschwitz camp after he arrived there in 1943. Most doctors who have testified and prisoners who have testified have indicated he was ubiquitous, and, indeed, stories do exist of his selection activities and of his medical involvement. The Frankfurt Court which indicted him charged him with "hideous crimes" committed alone or with others "willfully and with bloodlust". Included in the crimes against humanity were selections, lethal injections, shootings, beatings and other forms of deliberate killing. He was religiously involved in all aspects, but particularly in the twins experiments, according to members of C.A.N.D.L.E.S., twins who survived the experiments.

Descriptions of him indicate he was a very attractive man, always well groomed and very aristocratic in stature. Prisoners remember him as the man with the riding crop in his right hand and as the man who wore immaculately clean uniforms and boots with a high polish.

Beginning in 1944, twins were selected and placed in special barracks. Some of those selected - like Irene and Rene Guttman were already in the camp. Others like Eva and Miriam Mozes were selected on the ramp and placed in the twins barracks. It is believed that Mengele had worked with twins under Vershuer at the University of Frankfurt. Auschwitz offered Mengele unlimited number of specimens where twins could be studied at random. According to Dr. Miklos Nyiszli in *Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, twins provided the perfect experimental specimens. One could serve as a control while the other endured the experiments. It was well known in the camp that when a twin went to the infirmary, (s)he never returned and that the other twin disappeared too (Eva Mozes Kor, *Echoes from Auschwitz*). Nyiszli describes the shots of phenol which were used to kill the second twin.

Twins in the experiments describe three days of what must have been psychological examination and three days of laboratory experiments. "Three times a week we were marched to Auschwitz to a big brick building, sort of like a big gymnasium. They would keep us there for about six or eight hours at a time - most of the days. .... We would have to sit naked in the large room where we first entered, and people in white jackets would observe us and write down notes. They also would study every part of our bodies. They would photograph, measure our heads and arms and bodies, and compare the measurements of one twin to another. The process seemed to go on and on." (*Echoes from Auschwitz*, Kor).

The laboratory experiments were described by Kor as follows: "Most of the time, they would take blood from one arm, and they gave us shots in the other." (*Echoes from Auschwitz*, Kor).

Experiments did not end with the death of the twins. Dissection of the corpses for final medical analysis is well documented by Nyiszli and by Lifton.

Being a twin, regardless of age, meant survival in 1944. Some 3,000 children (or about 1,500 sets of twins) were selected for the experiments. They were not terrified of him but rather they were often intimidated by some of what he did. They knew of his temper and his passion for his work. Yet, they were also aware of his role in their survival. "Being on Mengele's list was better than being on no list," said Eva Mozes Kor.

Of the children involved, only about 200 were alive when the camp was liberated by the Soviet Army on January 27, 1945. These are the children shown so often in documentaries

walking between the wires of the Auschwitz I camp. Today they reside all over the world and they seek information on what was done to them. Their files have never been located and what was done to them remains a mystery today.

Source: [C.A.N.D.L.E.S.](#)

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## **Biographies of the Artists**

***Dina Gottliebova Babbitt (1923-2009)*** was born in Brno, Czechoslovakia in 1923. She was a 19-year-old art student when she was sent to Theresienstadt. In 1943, Babbitt and her mother were deported to Auschwitz, where they were kept in a special Family Camp. Babbitt tried to cheer the children by painting a mural on the barrack wall of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."

The mural attracted the attention of the notorious Dr. Mengele, the Angel of Death, known for his horrific medical experiments. Frustrated that modern color photography could not accurately capture the skin tones of his Gypsy "patients," Mengele ordered Babbitt to paint watercolor portraits of them. One of her subjects was a girl named Celine, who became a friend. Celine is shown with a blue scarf and one ear protruding. Babbitt explains, "Because Mengele," obsessed with ideas of racial purity, "wanted to see how the ear was formed." Soon after Babbitt completed 11 portraits, the entire Gypsy camp was gassed, Celine with them.

Seven of the 11 portraits that saved Babbitt remain where she created them, on display at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Poland. "These are my paintings; they belong to me, my soul is in them, and without these paintings I wouldn't be alive," she says. Babbitt has requested that the "Gypsies" be returned to her but the Museum refuses, claiming they do not belong to her but are part of the Polish National Treasury and must remain as evidence of the history of Nazi atrocities. The pieces here are photographic copies sent by the Auschwitz Museum.

A Congressional resolution supported Babbitt's request. Groups petitioning support of Babbitt's claim on her paintings are trying to sway the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, thus far to no avail. More than 450 artists, including animators Stan Lee and Neal Adams, support her position.

***Yehuda Bacon (born 1929)*** was born in Czechoslovakia to a Chassidic family. In 1941, he was sent to Theresienstadt at the age of thirteen, where he began to draw. While in Theresienstadt, he studied under the direction of artists Otto Unger, Bedrich Fritta and Leo Hass. But his mentor was Dr. Karel Fleischmann who was ultimately put to death for his revealing sketches of the ghastly ghetto life. In 1943 Bacon was deported to Auschwitz.

One day he was brought to the commandant because they discovered a sketch he made. He was beaten badly for this act of resistance. But while he was in custody, his entire barracks was sent to the gas chambers. His life was spared due to his art. After liberation in 1946, he emigrated to Israel where he studied art at the Bezalel Academy of Art and then continued his studies in Italy, London, New York and Paris.

A short time following his liberation from Auschwitz, the teenage survivor-artist drew a portrait of his father who perished in the death camp. The haunting image of his father whose life was ended in the furnaces of Auschwitz is reconstructed by the son who still remembers the father he

was recently separated from. "This recollection will never be eradicated once committed it to paper", he says. In 1961 Bacon testified at the Eichmann trial. Bacon lectured in the art department of Haifa University and at the Bezalel Academy of Art, Jerusalem.

**Samuel Bak (born 1933)** was born in Vilna, Poland, a vibrant cultural center known as the "Jerusalem of Lithuania." He was recognized as a small child of possessing extraordinary artistic genius. When he was six years old, the Nazis' invaded Vilna and Bak's world was shattered forever. Shortly after the German occupation, Bak and his family were forced into the Ghetto where ironically his painting career began. When the famous Yiddish poets, Avrom Sutzkever and Shmerke Kaczerginski discovered his early talent, despite the dehumanizing conditions and the ever-present threat of deportation to the killing fields of the nearby Ponary Forest, they arranged for the child prodigy the first public exhibition of his drawings at the age of nine. Bak says, "The people needed simply for the sake of their own soul, of their own identity, of their own survival, they needed culture. They needed something to give a meaning to their life."

When Vilna was liberated in 1944, Bak was one of only 200 survivors from a once thriving community of over 80,000 people. Bak immigrated in 1948 to Israel. He studied art at the Bezalel School in Jerusalem and at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

Bak's life has been clearly marked by his pervasive haunting childhood memories of the Shoah. He says, "I carry in me today the survivor of the million children that did not survive." He tells stories with his brush through metaphors of human destruction and irreparable loss and dreams that mirror his past with the present. Bak imbues his paintings with an irony that parallel some of the works of Rene Magritte, Max Ernst and Giorgio de Chirico. However, Bak's paintings become a complex process of healing. Samuel Bak's artistic vision unwittingly becomes both witness to inhumanity and reconstruction for the future.

**Friedl Dicker-Brandeis (1898-1944)** was an established and respected artist when she was ordered to report to Theresienstadt, with her training from the Bauhaus school. Instead of taking cherished personal belongings with her, she stuffed her suitcases full of art materials, knowing that the children in the ghetto would need a creative outlet as they suffered unbearable hardships. She went from room to room in the children's dorms, offering art lessons to any child who wanted them. While many skilled artists traded lessons for food in the ghetto, Dicker-Brandeis refused to accept a crumb. Dicker-Brandeis perished in Auschwitz, but the drawings and paintings created by her students in the ghetto were recovered, and have been exhibited around the world.

**Bedřich Fritta (1906-1944)** worked as a cartoonist and graphic designer in Prague before the war. On November 24, 1941, Fritta was among 342 Jewish men from Prague deported by the Germans to Theresienstadt as part of the *Aufbaukommando* (construction battalion). In Theresienstadt he worked in the Technical Department, the *Zeichenstube*, where many artists were assigned. There he had access to drawing materials and paper, and he and other artists made drawings of Theresienstadt and its prisoners. On July 17, 1944, he was arrested with other painters there for creating what the Nazis called "horror propaganda." He was sent along with his wife, Hensi, and three-year-old son, Tommy, to the Little Fortress. Along with his friends, Bloch, Ungar and Haas, he was tortured. His wife died of starvation.

With the painter Leo Haas, he was deported to Auschwitz on October 26, 1944 and he died there on November 8, 1944. Fritta's son was adopted after the war by Leo Haas and his wife. An album made by Fritta and dedicated to his son on his third birthday was found hidden in the walls at Theresienstadt.



**Judith Goldstein (born 1932)** was born in Vilna, Poland, now the capital of Lithuania. Germany invaded the city in 1941, and several months later all the Jews were placed in a Ghetto. Seventy thousand people were murdered by gunshot in the nearby Ponary Forest, within two years. After the liquidation of the Ghetto, in 1943, she and her mother then spent two years in concentration camps in Poland and Latvia: first Riga, then Stutthof and Torun. In 1945 Goldstein, her mother and aunt were liberated in Bydgoszcz, Poland. By many miracles they survived. After the war they were sent to a Displaced Persons camp in Germany, and in 1949 she finally made her way to the United States.

Goldstein reports: "I wish I was never part of the Holocaust. Still a child of seven, I was meant to die, but I lived and survived the horrors of genocide. Many times I tried to leave it all behind, but it refuses to leave me."

Goldstein says; "I paint the images of my childhood and play the images I see." "I feel very lucky to have survived and have been given the opportunity to turn to my experiences of horror into works of art and musical compositions. I undertook a painful journey, but what I've seen through these eyes, I made a vow to record my childhood memories, as they were."

Her canvases are filled with imagery and metaphors of the Holocaust. Her approach is sometimes disarming. Goldstein says, "My life was gray, but now, reflecting back, I see it through multi-color pastels. My invisible witnesses help me reconstruct scenes that I was a part of and must share with the world so they will never forget."

**Willi Groag (1914-2001)** When the end of the war came Willy Groag, who was the head of one of the Girls Homes at Terezin, collected everything that had been written by the children and was left there after they had gone. All of their writings - if the poems' authors had not survived (which was rare) and hadn't taken the poems back - were collected by Mr. Groag and were given to the Jewish museum in Prague.

Willy Groag went on to live a long life in Israel with his wife Madla and daughter Eva, who was born at Terezin. The work he collected at the end of the war was later published, eventually reaching a wide audience under the title I Never Saw Another Butterfly. © and available at <http://www.radio.cz/en/article/50021>.

**Alfred Kantor (1923-2003)** was born in Prague. He had finished one year of a two-year commercial art course at the Rotter School of Advertising when he and all the other Jews were expelled.

His 127 paintings and sketches of concentration camp life were published in 1971 by McGraw-Hill as "The Book of Alfred Kantor," which included his account of his experiences. "My commitment to drawing came out of a deep instinct of self-preservation and undoubtedly helped me to deny the unimaginable horrors of that time," he wrote. While some of the book's paintings were made inside the three camps and smuggled out, Mr. Kantor -- who had destroyed most of his work, fearing that the Nazis would find it and kill him -- re-created many pictures from memory at the end of the war.

The paintings, done in a rapid, Impressionist style, first show daily scenes in the "model ghetto" that the Nazis created for Czechoslovak and other Jews in Theresienstadt, a walled fortress town 40 miles north of Prague. Though conditions were difficult, they appear tolerable. For example, Mr. Kantor sketched the new shops and fresh food that suddenly appeared in the town when an International Red Cross delegation visited.

For most Jews Theresienstadt was only a stopping place on the way to the death camps. And Mr. Kantor was eventually herded into a cattle truck and transported to a much grimmer life in Auschwitz. Finding drawing materials there was far more difficult than at Theresienstadt, where he got what he needed from the administration offices. But a physician slipped him a watercolor set while he was working in the Auschwitz sick ward.

His sketches show all the horrors of that camp: naked women being sorted into those who would live and those who would die; prisoners loading corpses from the gas chambers into trucks; the desperate search for food; the lurid red glow of flames from the crematorium chimneys at night; brutal guards; and the haughty and infamous chief physician, Josef Mengele, in Nazi uniform.

In 1944 Mr. Kantor was sent with other prisoners to help rebuild a German synthetic-fuel plant at Schwarzheide, near Dresden. There he continued drawing, despite grueling 12-hour work shifts. When the war ended the next year, he was one of only 175 prisoners out of 1,000 who survived a death march back to Theresienstadt. The last picture, "Happy End," shows a liberated concentration camp inmate, still in his prison stripes, talking with friends on a Prague street on May 10, 1945, two days after V-E Day. © and available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/26/nyregion/alfred-kantor-dies-at-79-depicted-life-in-nazi-camps.html>.

**Henry Rosmarin (1925-2001)** Born in Czeladz, Poland, Rosmarin survived several concentration camp imprisonments during World War II and was liberated by Soviet troops in 1945 while on a death march. After the war, he was reunited with his childhood sweetheart, Janet Jakubowicz. The couple married while in a displaced persons camp, and came to the United States in 1948.

He was an ardent supporter of Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, both in volunteering and working part time with the organization's research staff. Rosmarin was also visible at many Foundation fundraisers, moving audiences with his harmonica playing and his powerful story of survival. Henry's ability to play the harmonica saved his life during the Holocaust, and he inspired people with his story and musical talents for many years. © and available at [http://www.jewishjournal.com/obituaries/article/henry\\_rosmarin\\_20010907/](http://www.jewishjournal.com/obituaries/article/henry_rosmarin_20010907/)

**Karl Stojka (1931-2003)** was the fourth of six children born to Roman Catholic Gypsy parents in the village of Wampersdorf in eastern Austria. The Stojkas belonged to a tribe of Gypsies called the Lowara Roma, who made their living as itinerant horse traders. They lived in a traveling family wagon, and spent winters in Austria's capital of Vienna. Karl's ancestors had lived in Austria for more than 200 years.

1933-39: I grew up used to freedom, travel and hard work. In March 1938 our wagon was parked for the winter in a Vienna campground, when Germany annexed Austria just before my seventh birthday. The Germans ordered us to stay put. My parents converted our wagon into a wooden house, but I wasn't used to having permanent walls around me. My father and oldest sister began working in a factory, and I started grade school.

1940-44: By 1943 my family had been deported to a Nazi camp in Birkenau for thousands of Gypsies. Now we were enclosed by barbed wire. By August 1944 only 2,000 Gypsies were left alive; 918 of us were put on a transport to Buchenwald to do forced labor. There the Germans decided that 200 of us were incapable of working and were to be sent back to Birkenau. I was one of

them; they thought I was too young. But my brother and uncle insisted that I was 14 but a dwarf. I got to stay. The rest were returned to be gassed.

Karl was later deported to the Flossenbürg concentration camp. He was freed near Roetz, Germany, by American troops on April 24, 1945. After the war, he returned to Vienna. (<http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/idcard.php?ModuleId=10006784>)

**Frederick Terna (born 1923)** was born in Vienna to a family from Prague. In 1941 he was taken to Lipa and from there to Theresienstadt where he got his first art lessons. Terna learned sketching from a distant cousin, the German Expressionist, Bedrich Fritta. Fritta was ultimately killed for his revealing political art. When Terna was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, he gave his clandestine artwork to a colleague for safe-keeping. In 1944 Terna was transported from Auschwitz to Kaufering, a sub-camp of Dachau. As World War II was ending, the Nazis herded their prisoners into cattle cars for a last ride to Dachau. Terna managed to prop open a door to the train and he and friend jumped out. The prisoners who remained on the train all perished. Terna was liberated near Landsberg in Bavaria. Weighing 77 pounds, he hid in a hole until he was found by American soldiers.

In 1946, he went to Paris and in 1952 he settled in New York, where he continues to live. Terna became an internationally recognized artist and scholar, whose work is included in a number of collections including the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. In the 1970s Terna discovered that his hidden pieces from Theresienstadt survived and were archived at Beit Theresienstadt in Israel.

**Simon Wiesenthal (1908-2005)** In 1936, Simon married Cyla Mueller and worked in an architectural office in Lvov. Their life together was happy until 1939 when Germany and Russia signed their "non-aggression" pact and agreed to partition Poland between them; the Russian army soon occupied Lvov, and shortly afterward began the Red purge of Jewish merchants, factory owners and other professionals. In the purge of "bourgeois" elements that followed the Soviet occupation of Lvov Oblast at the beginning of World War II, Wiesenthal's stepfather was arrested by the NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs - Soviet Secret Police) and eventually died in prison, his stepbrother was shot, and Wiesenthal himself, forced to close his business, became a mechanic in a bedspring factory. Later he saved himself, his wife, and his mother from deportation to Siberia by bribing an NKVD commissar. When the Germans displaced the Russians in 1941, a former employee of his, then serving the collaborationist Ukrainian Auxiliary police, helped him to escape execution by the Nazis. But he did not escape incarceration. Following initial detention in the Janwska concentration camp just outside Lvov, he and his wife were assigned to the forced labor camp serving the Ostbahn Works, the repair shop for Lvov's Eastern Railroad.

Early in 1942, the Nazi hierarchy formally decided on the "Final Solution" to the "Jewish problem" -- Annihilation. Throughout occupied Europe a terrifying genocide machine was put into operation. In August 1942, Wiesenthal's mother was sent to the Belzec death camp. By September, most of his and his wife's relatives were dead; a total of eighty-nine members of both families perished.

Because his wife's blonde hair gave her a chance of passing as an "Aryan", Wiesenthal made a deal with the Polish underground. In return for detailed charts of railroad junction points made by him for use by saboteurs, his wife was provided with false papers identifying her as "Irene Kowalska," a Pole, and spirited out of the camp in the autumn of 1942. She lived in Warsaw for two years and then worked in the Rhineland as a forced laborer, without her true identity ever

being discovered.

With the help of the deputy director, Wieselth himself escaped the Ostbahn camp in October 1943, just before the Germans began liquidating all the inmates. In June 1944, he was recaptured and sent back to Janwska where he would almost certainly have been killed had the German eastern front not collapsed under the advancing Red Army. Knowing they would be sent into combat if they had no prisoners to justify their rear-echelon assignment, the SS guards at Janwska decided to keep the few remaining inmates alive. With 34 prisoners out of an original 149,000, the 200 guards joined the general retreat westward, picking up the entire population of the village of Chelmiec along the way to adjust the prisoner-guard ratio.

Very few of the prisoners survived the westward trek through Plaszow, Gross-Rosen and Buchenwald, which ended at Mauthausen in upper Austria. Weighing less than 100 pounds and lying helplessly in a barracks where the stench was so strong that even hardboiled SS guards would not enter, Wieselth was barely alive when Mauthausen was liberated by an American armored unit on May 5, 1945.

As soon as his health was sufficiently restored, Wieselth began gathering and preparing evidence on Nazi atrocities for the War Crimes Section of the United States Army. After the war, he also worked for the Army's Office of Strategic Services and Counter-Intelligence Corps and headed the Jewish Central Committee of the United States Zone of Austria, a relief and welfare organization. Late in 1945, he and his wife, each of whom had believed the other to be dead, were reunited, and in 1946, their daughter Pauline was born.

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(<http://www.wieselth.com/site/pp.asp?c=lsKWLbPJLnF&b=4441351>)

***Ela Weissberger (born 1931)*** Ela Stein Weissberger was 11 years old when she arrived at Terezin in February 1942, with her mother, sister and grandmother. Greeting their arrival at the Nazi controlled camp in Czechoslovakia were several young men, hanging dead in the square.

Irma Lauscher was one of the volunteer teachers in Terezin. She taught Jewish traditions and holidays. In January 1943, Irma decided to celebrate Tu B'Shevat, the Jewish New Year of the trees, and bribed one of the guards to smuggle a tree sapling into the ghetto. She organized a ceremony of dancing and singing with the children of the ghetto, and together they planted the tree, sharing their water rations. The children nurtured their tree, wrote poetry about it, and were inspired by it. They called it the *Etz Hayim*-the Tree of Life.

Of the 15, 000 children who were imprisoned in Terezin, about 150 survived. After the war, Ela Weissberger was among the handful of children who returned and found the tree still alive. They carefully transplanted the tree next to the crematorium and dedicated a headstone with the prophetic words of Isaiah: "As the days of a tree shall be the days of my people!" A poem was written dedicated to this *Etz Hayim*, which grew to be over 60 feet tall:

*I returned home here to Theresienstadt.  
I stand guard here on this rise of this hill  
by this tree that moves slightly  
as it creaks the names of the children  
slowly to me...every night.*

*We watch over this place. This tree and I.  
We watch over the children of Theresienstadt.*

*We still hear their songs.  
Shhh-hh-h...do you hear?*

While in Terezin, Ela performed in Brundibar, a children's opera. This opera is currently performed worldwide, often with Ela present as a special guest. Ela Weissberger returns often to lecture in the Czech Republic.

Information in this portion was taken from and is available at ©  
[http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2000/10/19/tem\\_a\\_conversation\\_with.html](http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2000/10/19/tem_a_conversation_with.html) and (c)  
[http://www.holocaustandhumanity.org/chhe\\_tubishvat.html](http://www.holocaustandhumanity.org/chhe_tubishvat.html).

Above biographies, unless otherwise noted, are © and available at  
<http://www.asseenthroughtheseeyes.com/#!/the-artists/4532180106>.

**Suggested Activities** (NOTE: National Learning Standards have been provided where appropriate. As always, different states and even school districts will have learning goals and standards that vary; the teacher should be sure to consult for specific standards and benchmarks at the local level.)

**If used in an art or art appreciation or art history course, any of the following national standards for art may apply, based on how the teacher chooses to use the film:**

**NA-VA.9-12.1 UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING MEDIA, TECHNIQUES, AND PROCESSES**

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

**NA-VA.9-12.2 USING KNOWLEDGE OF STRUCTURES AND FUNCTIONS**

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

**NA-VA.9-12.3 CHOOSING AND EVALUATING A RANGE OF SUBJECT MATTER, SYMBOLS, AND IDEAS**

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

**NA-VA.9-12.4 UNDERSTANDING THE VISUAL ARTS IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURES**

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

**NA-VA.9-12.5 REFLECTING UPON AND ASSESSING THE CHARACTERISTICS AND MERITS OF THEIR WORK AND THE WORK OF OTHERS**

[\[SOURCE\]](#)

**NA-VA.9-12.6 MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN VISUAL ARTS  
AND OTHER DISCIPLINES**

## **Pre-viewing**

1. Very early in the film, in regard to the works of art he created, one of the survivors states, “I have to do it without much question; I have to get rid of my memory.”
  - a. How do you define “art”?
  - b. How do you define “memory”?
  - c. If you stated something along the lines that art is a monument to idea or emotion, and a monument stands to remind, then what could the artist have meant?

**NA-VA.9-12.3 CHOOSING AND EVALUATING A RANGE OF  
SUBJECT MATTER, SYMBOLS, AND IDEAS**

2. In reference to then-18-year old Adolf Hitler’s failed application to the Vienna Academy of Art, one of the artists who was accepted at the same time remarked that, had the tables been turned -- “I would have run the world quite differently...” and Hitler would have gone on being a bad painter.
  - a. We know that Hitler fancied himself an artist, and wanted to collect major artworks from around Europe and across time. Yet he also censored artists’ work which he felt went against his so-called Aryan ideals. How precious is freedom of expression?
  - b. React to the following quote, from the Terezin art teacher, Friedl Dicker-Brandeis: “The most important thing to expect from creative drawing is the expression of all powerful freedom.”
  - c. Hitler’s raw cruelty unleashed a new kind of artist, who documented the horror chambers. For an artist, it is impossible *not* to create. How would you describe a freedom of expression that comes out of oppression and fear?

**NA-VA.9-12.3 CHOOSING AND EVALUATING A RANGE OF  
SUBJECT MATTER, SYMBOLS, AND IDEAS**

## **Viewing**

1. Early in the film, when describing the Theresienstadt ghetto, a remark is made that the entire town was designed for 4000 people, yet 140,000 Jews were crowded into the Terezin ghetto.



- a. How was life compromised?
- b. Can you list the considerations (deprivations) that became common based on this level of overcrowding? Be sure to include both material and abstract concerns.

**NSS-WH.5-12.8 ERA 8: A HALF-CENTURY OF CRISIS AND ACHIEVEMENT, 1900-1945**

**NSS-C.9-12.5 ROLES OF THE CITIZEN**

2. In the Terezin segment, survivor Ela Weissberger appears before the camera in her own clothes, but with a yellow Star of David affixed to her dress.
  - a. Why do you think she chose to do that?
  - b. How does it make you feel?
3. The viewer is informed that children were separated from their parents and housed in separate buildings from the adults.
  - a. Why do you suppose the Nazis planned this strategy?
  - b. Yehuda Bacon tells that Terezin children could lead a more normal life. How? Again, why do you suppose the Nazis chose to do this?
  - c. Discuss the influence of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis.
  - d. What did the young artists use in place of more conventional art supplies?

**NSS-C.9-12.5 ROLES OF THE CITIZEN**

4. “Even the smallest sketch gave the artist a sense of control and freedom.” How?
5. Known artists in Terezin were often taken aside by the Nazis for what purpose? And if they were found out to be creating so-called “unofficial” works of art, what was their fate?
6. At one time Theresienstadt was set up as a “model ghetto” in order to fool the world about the true treatment of the Jews. In reality, it was a transit stop for Jews heading to the east. Yehuda Bacon comments that when the Red Cross arrived, if they’d gone 50 yards to either side they would have seen the true horrors of the ghetto. In the face of the war raging around the world and with their “racial goals” at hand, why did the Nazis expend the time, money, and energy to put on this charade?
  - a. Ela Weissman remarks that the only time they didn’t have to put on the star was when they performed the opera “Brundibar”. Do you think this made them more enthusiastic to do the musical?
  - b. To the children singing, what was the last line of the opera to symbolize?

**NSS-WH.5-12.8 ERA 8: A HALF-CENTURY OF CRISIS AND ACHIEVEMENT, 1900-1945**

**NA-M.9-12.8 UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MUSIC, THE OTHER ARTS, AND DISCIPLINES OUTSIDE THE ARTS**

**NA-M.9-12.9 UNDERSTANDING MUSIC IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURE**

7. Vilna was known as the “Jerusalem of Lithuania” and was the seat of Jewish culture in the east. Why did the Vilna ghetto enjoy a period of vibrant cultural activity?
8. Samuel Bak states that cultural expression gave people a meaning for their lives. How?
  - a. Can you state ways in which music, art, or dance increases your satisfaction with your day-to-day existence?
  - b. In what ways would your life be different if these things ceased to exist?

**NA-D.9-12.5 DEMONSTRATING AND UNDERSTANDING DANCE IN VARIOUS CULTURES AND HISTORICAL PERIODS**

**NA-M.9-12.9 UNDERSTANDING MUSIC IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURE**

**NA-VA.9-12.4 UNDERSTANDING THE VISUAL ARTS IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURES**

9. Judith Goldstein tells about the massacre at the Ponary Forest near the Vilna ghetto, where approximately 40,000 Jews were shot. A resort area about five miles from Vilna was the site where from July 1941 to July 1944, about 100,000 people were executed by the Nazis, with the aid of special Lithuanian units. The majority of the victims were Jewish men, women, and children from Vilna and the surrounding area, as well as from other countries. In addition, a few thousand non-Jewish Soviet prisoners of war and civilians were killed there. In spite of the deceit that the Nazis staged to mislead the victims brought to Ponary, the nature of the place was known in the Vilna ghetto, as early as the fall of 1941, from reports of the few people who managed to escape during the

executions

([http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0016\\_0\\_15966.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0016_0_15966.html)).

- a. Can you draw an image that would reflect the emotions of those remaining in Vilna who had this knowledge?
- b. Can you write a verse or poem that would reflect the emotions of those remaining in Vilna who had this knowledge?
- c. Define the term “bystander”. Is it possible that those who had knowledge of Ponary yet remained in the ghetto were bystanders? Explain your thoughts on this difficult issue.
- d. *Quiet, quiet, let's be silent  
Graves are growing here.*

React to these lines of poetry, which speak to the killing fields at Ponary Forest. What is the point of view of the writer, and why do you think he makes the request to be silent?

#### **NA-VA.9-12.4 UNDERSTANDING THE VISUAL ARTS IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURES**

#### **NL-ENG.K-12.2 UNDERSTANDING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE**

#### **NSS-WH.5-12.8 ERA 8: A HALF-CENTURY OF CRISIS AND ACHIEVEMENT, 1900-1945**

10. We are told that Dr. Josef Mengele was responsible for the deaths of approximately 400,000 people at Auschwitz. What personal characteristics do you think might have allowed some to live (at least temporarily), while others were sent immediately to their deaths? For example, might national origin (politically or geographically) have made a difference in the first few weeks of internment?
11. Dina Gottliebowa-Babbitt tells how she came to be in the employ of Mengele. What concerns might Dina have had?
  - a. Were there reasons Dina should have trusted him?
  - b. Did Dina really have a choice?
12. Given what we hear in the film about the power Mengele had over life and death, why do you think he treated Dina Gottliebowa and Karl Stojka the way he did? Was Mengele taking a chance in any way?
  - a. Discuss the following quote: “The more we do to you, the less you seem to believe we are doing it.” – Josef Mengele
  - b. Can this statement apply to the “good” treatment received by Babbitt and Stojka?
13. At the Mauthausen killing center, we are told that life expectancy was no more than three days. Simon Wiesenthal was chosen to make drafts for the Nazis, but at night he lay in his bunk sketching the realities of the camp. He said he had to.
  - a. Why – what was his motivation?

- b. What does he mean when he says that at Camp Mauthausen, every stone was a human being?

**NSS-WH.5-12.8 ERA 8: A HALF-CENTURY OF CRISIS AND ACHIEVEMENT, 1900-1945**

14. Frederick Terna spoke of the freedom of the white rectangle (really, a piece of paper) in the face of a life regimented to the Nth degree. What did he mean?
15. We learn that musicians played while prisoners marched in and out of camp to work and were also hired to play for SS officers. How did music save the life of Henry Rosmarin?

**NA-M.9-12.9 UNDERSTANDING MUSIC IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURE**

16. Ela Weissberger said that when the war was over and she had survived, she hoped that her friends would return and that they would be reunited. And then she realized that there was no hope – that her friends would not be coming back. She says she now speaks in their voices – what do you think she means by that?

**NSS-WH.5-12.8 ERA 8: A HALF-CENTURY OF CRISIS AND ACHIEVEMENT, 1900-1945**

17. Near the end of the film, many of the artists comment that they are compelled to create their art, and Yehuda Bacon says that maybe people can learn from it. What value do these artworks have for you – what can you take from this film?

## ***Post-viewing -- Extensions***

1. Karl Stojka details the transport from Vienna to Auschwitz, a trip of eight days in a boxcar crammed with Gypsies. For research:
  - a. Why were the Gypsies persecuted by the Nazis?
  - b. How many Gypsies died at the hands of the Nazis?
  - c. Were any Gypsies spared death, and if so, why?

**NSS-WH.5-12.8 ERA 8: A HALF-CENTURY OF CRISIS AND ACHIEVEMENT, 1900-1945**

2. Yehuda Bacon comments that to arrive in Auschwitz was to arrive in a modern Hell. From the testimonies and artworks in this film, make a list of the living conditions that inmates of Auschwitz had to endure – describe this “modern Hell”.

**NSS-WH.5-12.8 ERA 8: A HALF-CENTURY OF CRISIS AND ACHIEVEMENT, 1900-1945**

3. Resistance comes in many forms: spiritual, physical, mental, etc. Can you list multiple forms or instances of resistance, as told in this film?

**NSS-C.9-12.5 ROLES OF THE CITIZEN**

4. Near the end of the film, there is a quote from Simon Wiesenthal: “When we come to the other world and meet the millions of Jews who died in the camps and they ask us ‘What have you done?’ I will say, ‘I did not forget you.’” Shortly after that, Willi Groag says, “We have to do everything to remain in the memory of mankind.”
  - a. Before the film began, you were asked to give your definition of “memory”. Has this definition changed?
  - b. In what ways did the artists depicted strive to keep memory alive?
5. React to this quote from Simon Wiesenthal, a motto: “Oh Lord, do not forgive them, for they know what they are doing.” If possible, read Wiesenthal’s memoir, The Sunflower. The first 95 pages are Wiesenthal’s testimony; the remainder of the 200+-page tome is a symposium of various thinkers discussing Wiesenthal’s stance on forgiveness.

**NL-ENG.K-12.2 UNDERSTANDING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE**

6. Dina Gottliebowa-Babbitt went through a long battle to regain possession of her artworks that were created for Josef Mengele in Auschwitz. Research the case, which was never resolved.
  - a. What are the fundamental issues in the case?
  - b. Can you make a defense for the Auschwitz museum and the government of Poland?

**NSS-C.9-12.5 ROLES OF THE CITIZEN**

Suggested Bibliographies:

For more information on the role of art, music, poetry, and literature in the Holocaust, please consult the following bibliographies.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, music, available at <http://www.ushmm.org/research/library/bibliography/?lang=en&content=music>

Springfield (MA) City Library, available at  
[http://www.springfieldlibrary.org/reading/holocaust\\_art.html](http://www.springfieldlibrary.org/reading/holocaust_art.html)

Holocaust Survivors and Remembrance Project, available at <http://isurvived.org/TOC-VI.html>

Bearing Witness: A Resource Guide to Literature, Poetry, Art, Music, and Videos by Holocaust Victims and Survivors, available at <http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=102129091>